

HUMAN
milk  *banking*
ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

September 29, 2015

Dear Chair Callton, Members of the Michigan House Committee on Health Policy and Representative Geiss,

On behalf of the Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) I am honored to state that we are in support of **House Bills 4206 and 4691**, legislation addressing the safety and distribution of human milk in the state of Michigan.

HMBANA promotes the health of babies and mothers through the provision of safe pasteurized donor human milk and supports breastfeeding success in mothers.

For 30 years, in support of safe access to donor milk and in the absence of federal regulatory infrastructure, HMBANA member milk banks, including the **Bronson Mothers' Milk Bank in Kalamazoo, Michigan** have collected, pasteurized, viral and bacterial tested, packaged, labeled, stored, distributed and tracked human milk shipments in accordance with strict independent guidelines established by HMBANA and is a requirement for membership of all Member milk banks. We also liaise with satellite milk collection sites (depots), physicians, hospitals, Lactation communities, Pediatric Nutrition specialists, FDA, CDC, third party payers, and families.

Now more than ever, HMBANA is engaged in strategies to identify and address obstacles to greater availability of safe banked donor milk across the United States for fragile infants as identified in the **Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding**, Action Step 12.

Provision of human milk saves vulnerable infants' lives by significantly reducing medical complications, as well as related escalating costs for our nation's Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs). Although the total number of milk banks increased by only 25% since 2005, the total volume of milk dispensed nearly doubled to 3.7 million annual ounces, thanks to optimized efficiency, increased donor recruitment, and stronger relationships with community based organizations across the country such as the **Black Mothers Breastfeeding Association**, medical providers and increased awareness of the importance of donor human milk among the general public.

HMBANA and our public health advocates and champions at the federal level seek to advance equitable public policy to make sure ALL babies across the US and especially sick or premature infants are afforded the same opportunities for achieving good health as a healthy infant. This legislation coming from Michigan is in our view some of the most innovative public policy insuring babies in this state and the parents who care for them have what they need to increase their chances at improved lifelong health. We urge you to advance this out of committee and applaud your efforts on behalf of Michigan's most vulnerable citizens.

Sincerely,



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President

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